



## United States Department of State Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations

### Forging Partnerships to Prevent Conflict

December 5, 2013

Colleagues and friends:

Nearly 200 Syrians living in Aleppo and other northern cities held by the Syrian opposition have learned civil defense skills in sessions funded by [CSO](#) and conducted by one of our Turkish partners. We also have provided them with search-and-rescue equipment, including respiratory masks, hardhats, gloves, flashlights, and tools such as crowbars and heavy-duty hammers. They desperately need this help, mainly because of bombardment by the regime. "In my neighborhood there was hardly anyone who knew how to properly rescue and treat injured civilians," one Syrian told us. "I learned a lot of useful things."

More citizens received this training thanks to the United Kingdom, which, after observing the training, agreed to contribute \$3.2 million to provide nine courses and equipment for the Idlib governorate. Japan, France, and other nations may donate, as well.

This is just one example of the importance of our international partners, both select governments and multilateral institutions. We simply could not do our job without them. They provide funds as well as people with a wide range of skills to complement U.S. Government initiatives. In addition, they have different experiences and perspectives, and sometimes have access to places that we don't. In this rapidly evolving field of conflict prevention and stabilization, they also contribute valuable insights into how we can combine our strengths and increase the impact.



*Syrians (in beige) receiving CSO-funded search-and-rescue training, conducted by one of our implementing partners*

The value of international teamwork was evident earlier this year during the [Kenyan elections](#). CSO was there to help prevent a rerun of the violence that erupted after the 2007 balloting, when more than 1,300 Kenyans died and 660,000 were displaced. One of our assignments was to coordinate election observation with teams from Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, and other countries. All of us worked together to develop consistent public messages and election reporting. The election was largely peaceful.

On the other side of Africa, in [Senegal](#), the European Union has been an effective partner in the effort to end one of the world's longest conflicts. In 1982 the first shots were fired in an insurgency in Senegal's Casamance region, and for 30 years, stop-and-go efforts to negotiate peace came up short. The election in 2012 of Macky Sall as president brought renewed energy to the process, and CSO dispatched a seasoned ambassador to provide support. The EU also saw an opportunity to lend a hand, and our complementary efforts are helping the Government of

Senegal and the MFDC rebels move closer to peace.

The [Australian Civilian Corps \(ACC\)](#), the Australian version of CSO, was a vital partner as South Sudan was trying to maintain peace after its independence vote in 2011. One ACC member had extensive experience in human rights and refugee operations, and she was invaluable as we worked with the UN to move refugees to a safer, more manageable area. She understood the differing needs of female heads of households, the elderly, and separated children.

Working with the Syrian opposition is our largest engagement, and our partners' contributions have made it possible to ramp up initiatives so that the impact was even greater. Through the Integrated Community Security Program (ICSP), for example, CSO is leading an international effort to coordinate assistance to police and judicial actors in Syria's liberated territories. Denmark is helping fund the Aleppo Police and the Aleppo Police Training Center, while the United Kingdom plans to provide a broad range of support in Idlib Province. Canada deployed a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer, who is determining how the Mounties can help train police.

Many members of the CSO staff have worked alongside these committed partners, but probably no one has been as immersed as Claire Sneed, who has been based in London in order to build and strengthen these relationships. "Claire has proved to be a natural in this role," says Andrew Hyde, CSO's deputy director of partnerships. "She is an effective communicator and is adept at maximizing mutual benefits."

Recently, I have had two good opportunities to spend time with a number of these partners. At the annual UN General Assembly, CSO helped develop a more sophisticated international approach in several critical areas, including multilateral peacebuilding initiatives, international mediation capacity, and atrocities prevention. For instance, we took part in several high-level discussions, including one with the [UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide](#) Adama Dieng, that should enable us to work more effectively with partners to identify and head off atrocities. A Copenhagen gathering of eight countries in November, the second such event, gave us a chance to explore additional opportunities to collaborate. Of course, we devoted significant time to Syria-but also considered how to apply lessons we are learning there to other places. In addition, we laid the groundwork for sustained efforts with religious leaders and the business world to prevent and mitigate conflict.

While this letter focuses on international partners, we also count on a broad array of allies from State, other federal agencies, NGOs, and host-country organizations. The 54-nation African Union is an organization that we increasingly work with, particularly in [Somalia](#) and in the effort to [counter Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army](#). In addition, CSO makes a special effort to explore beyond capitals to find groups, organizations, and individuals that have been overlooked.

We are dedicated to bringing [innovative approaches to conflict-prevention and response](#) throughout the State Department. We welcome your ideas on how we can help nations beleaguered by conflict. You can write us at [CSOpublic@state.gov](mailto:CSOpublic@state.gov). We also encourage you to forward our news to people you think would like to join this conversation. Previous dispatches are [here](#). You can find us at [@StateCSO](#) or [www.facebook.com/StateCSO](http://www.facebook.com/StateCSO).

Best,

Ambassador Rick Barton  
Assistant Secretary for Conflict and Stabilization Operations

P.S. Partners of all kinds are also essential as CSO builds the Civilian Response Network (CRN).



The people and organizations in the CRN provide a pool of talent that enables us to find the right person at the right time to supplement our staff in [Nigeria](#), [Burma](#), and other places we're working. The CRN includes governments, think tanks, universities, and other sources of skilled people. We also are building a bullpen of subject-matter and regional experts, such as retired Foreign Service officers, willing to deploy on short notice.

Stay Connected:



[Forward this email](#)

 SafeUnsubscribe™



Try it FREE today.

This email was sent to brandtew@state.gov by [crnpublic@state.gov](mailto:crnpublic@state.gov) |  
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations | 2121 Virginia Avenue | Washington | DC | 20037